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JOHN KEYMORS
OBSERVATION
MADE UPON THE
Dutch Fishing,
About the year 1601.

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DEMONSTRATING

That there is more Wealth Raiſed out
of Herrings and other Fiſh in his
Majeſties Seas, by the Neighbouring Nations
in one year, then the King of
Spain hath from the *Indies* in four.

AND

That there were twenty thouſand Ships and other
Veſſels, and about four hundred thouſand People
then ſet on work by both Sea and Land; and
maintained only by Fiſhing upon the Coaſts
of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*.

LONDON,
Printed from the Original Manuſcript, for Sir *Edward
Ford* in the year, 1664.

JOHN KEYMORS OBSERVATION MADE UPON THE Dutch Fishing, About the year 1601.

BEing deſirous to look into the World, to get knowledge for my Conntrys good, I travelled *France*, *Germany*, and divers other Places, and Free-ſtates. I found in *Lubeck* 700. great Ships, in *Hamborrugh* about 600. *Embden* lately a Fiſher Town, within the memory of man not known to have 60. Ships, hath 1400. almoſt as many as belongs to all *England*. *Holland*, not ſo big as one of your Majeſties Shires; 18. Dutch miles long, and 5. miles broad, hath about it 30. walled Towns, 400. Villages, and 20000. ſail of Ships and Hoyes; which is more then *England*, *France*, *Spain*, *Portugall*, *Itally*, *Scotland*, *Denmark*, *Polland*, *Sweethen* and *Ruſhea* have all put together: and builds every year 1000. new Ships, having in their Soil neither matter to build them, nor Marchandizes to ſet them forth, ſtanding in admiration how this might be, I traced the Countries twice over from Town to Town, and from thence along his Majeſties Sea Coſts of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*; where I found not only an *Indian* fleet of 40. or 50. ſail, with 5. or 6000. people yearly imployed in this Your Fiſhing, one of the greateſt Sea-buſineſſes of the World; but at the leaſt 20000. ſail, and above 400000. perſons of all Nations ſet on work in his Majeſties Seas, about taking thoſe innumerable riches of Herrings, and other fiſh which offer themſelves to his Majeſties Kingdoms above all Nations.

The *Hollanders* have above 4100. fiſhing Ships and Veſſels, whereof 100. Doggerbotes, 700. Pinks and Wellbotes, 700. Stranbotes, 400. Evers, and 400. Galliotts, Drivers, and Todbotes, and 1200. Buſſes; ſince I ſollicited this to have 200. Buſſes built for *England*, the *Hollanders* have made 800. new Buſſes more, in all belonging to *Holland* 4100. Buſſes and other fiſhing Ships.

The 1500. Strandbotes, Evers, Galliotts, Drivers, and Todbotes fiſh upon their own Coaſts, and every of them ſets on work one other Veſſel to fetch ſalt and tranſport fiſh into other Countries, ſo is their 3000. Veſſels, and 40000. perſons employed and maintained by fiſhing upon their own Coaſts.

The 700. Pinks and Welbotes from 60. to 100. Tunns a peice, Doggerbotes of about 150. Tunns a peice, do fiſh altogether upon the Coaſts of *England*, and *Scotland* for Cod and Ling only, and every of theſe do ſet on work one other Veſſel, to fetch ſalt and tranſport fiſh into other Countries, after they are brought into their own Countries out of his Majeſties Seas.

The 2000. Buſſes from 60. to 100. and 200. Tunns a peice, employed only to take Herrings about *Baughamneſs* in *Scotland*, all along the Coaſts of *England* to the *Thames* mouth, from *June* to *November* 26. weeks; and one of their great Buſſes do take 8, 12, or 20. Laſt of Herrings at a draught in one night, and carries into their own Country 40, 50, or 100. Laſt in a Buſſe; and our fiſhing continueth but ſeven weeks with ſmall Crayets and Cobles from 5, to 10, 20. Tunns when the Herrings come home to our own road ſtead, and we take 1, 2, or 3. Laſts in a night, and when we bring home ſeven it is a great wonder.

Beſides the number taken by their 2000. Buſſes, the *Hollanders* have above 400. other Veſſels, called Gaynes and Evers, which do take Herrings at *Yarmouth*, and there ſell them, and carry away ready money: They have yet 500. other Ships uſually Trading every year to *London* with Codd and Ling taken in his Majeſties Seas, as alſo other parts of *England*, and here ſell them, and carry away moſt fine gold, which is made into baſe gold beyond Seas, a great hurt to the Wealth and Strength of our Land, and hinderance to Navigation and Marriners, and imployment of the poor of this Nation.

The *Hollanders* have made a Law in their own Country, that we ſhall ſell no White Herrings nor other fiſh there (upon penalty of confiſcation) becauſe they will have no other Nation to ſerve their Country with fiſh, but what they take themſelves; as well for the increaſe, as maintenance of Navigation, and ſetting their people on work. *Hamborough* likewiſe hath made an order that we ſhall ſell no Herrings there, before their Buſſes be come from Fiſhing, and have ſold all theirs. Thus they take Herrings in his Majeſties Seas, make laws to croſs and hinder us in our own Sales, for the inriching, and ſtrenghening themſelves, and the increaſing their Ships and Marriners.

The *Hollanders* do take in the time of 26. Weeks with 2000. Buſſes about 300000. Laſts (12. Barrells to the Laſt) which are ſold to the Merchants at 10, or 12l. the Laſt, the Fiſher-mans price which amounteth to 3. Millions and 600000l. The Merchants tranſport and ſell them into *Pomerland*, *Spruceland*, *Poland*, *Denmark*, *Leifeland*, *Ruſſia*, *Sweeden*, *Germany*, *Brabant*, *Flanders*, *France*. *Lukeland*, ſome into *England*, and other parts, and ſo ſell them from 16, to 18, 20, 30, and 36l. the Laſt and more, which I cannot eſteem to be ſold for leſs then five millions of pounds: All this benefit they make yearly of Herrings, taken out of his Majeſties Seas.

Beſides the Buſſes of *France*, *Hamborough*, and *Embden*, the *Hollanders* with their 2000. Buſſes do get the ſtart of us for the Herring fiſhing 19. weeks, and every Buſs doth take her ſelf twice or thrice full, and they do ſerve near 20. Kingdoms, Dukedoms, and Free-States, in the Eaſt and North-eaſt Regions, before our great fiſhing begins at *Yarmouth*; and before our fiſhing be ended. The *Sound*, and the Rivers that way are frozen; ſo we cannot paſs, nor vent into thoſe places.

For Cod and Ling they ſend forth about 1000. Sail from 50. to 100. Tunns a peice, every Ship making 4, or 5, and ſome 6. voyages in a year, where our ſmall Crayers ſeldome make 2. voyages; which huge quantity of Fiſh and Herrings taken in his Majeſties Seas they carry into their own Country, and afterwards by their own ſhipping tranſport them into Forraign Kingdoms, ſo much to their exceeding advantage, that in ſhort time they will be able to eat all our ſhipping out at Sea, as may be conjectured by their former increaſe in ſo few years.

Beſides the principal adventurers, I noted that thouſands of Men, their Sons, Daughters, and Maid Servants, which take 40s. or 3l. wages in a year, ſome of them have 5l, 10l, and 20l. adventure and more in the Buſſes, whereby they grow to great wealth before they come to be married, beſides the Men Servants.

The return of Marchandize, Wares and Coyn, for Herrings and other Fiſh (out of other Countries) is ſo great, that it maketh the Banck for Coyn, and Staple for all kind of Merchandize in *Holland*, where nothing groweth but a few Hoppes, Mader, and Cheeſe; ſo they make the Commodities of other Kingdoms ſerve their turns, to ſet their Ships and People on work, wherewith they inrich and ſtrengthen themſelves, to the admiration of all Nations. The States of *Holland* receive more Duties and Cuſtomes for Laſts of Herrings, Fiſh, and other Profits inwards, and outwards (in one year) then all the Cuſtomes of *England* comes unto in two years. There was paid above 300000l. 14. years paſt, beſides the Cuſtome of all other Marchandize, for Exizes, Licences, Waſtage, and Laſtage.

It is moſt evidently true, that his Majeſties Seas are far richer then the King of *Spains Indies*, and there is more made of Fiſh taken by the *French*, *Biskers*, *Portugall*, *Spaniards*, *Hollanders*, *Hamburgers*, *Breemers*, *Embdeners*, *Scotiſh*, *Iriſh*, and *Engliſh* in one year, then the King of *Spain* hath in four years out of the *Indies*; for there is about 20000. Ships and Veſſels, and above 400000. Perſons ſet on work, and maintained only by the Fiſhing upon the Coaſts of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, ſuch an excellent jent Jewel hath Neighbouring Princes and States upon his Majeſties Seas.

There was in *Holland* 126000. Marriners 20. years paſt, ſince which time their Shipping and Marriners are mightily increaſed, every Town is grown as great again as they were before the Wars, and beautified with an infinite number of ſumpteous Buildings, enriched with all kind of Marchandizes and Coyn; And where they had but one Haven in a Town before the Wars, they have now 2, or 3. and yet not able to hold their Ships, if they were all at home (at one time.) And they employ daily much of their ſtudies to open the gap of Trafique, and to make fullneſs of Trade, becauſe it maketh a rich Commonwealth; and they ſpare for no coſt, nor deny any privileges that may advance trade, and defend them from their enemies, whereby they prevail greatly.

Theſe Herrings are ſent Southward, by 20, 30, or 40. Laſt in a Ship, and makes rich return for Herrings, with Oyle, Wine, Prunes, Honey, Wooll, and ſuch like commodities, as *France*, *Spain*, and *Portugall* yeild, with much Coyn.

For the *Streights* they load 60, or 70. Laſt of Red-herrings in a Ship, returning for Herrings, Velvets, Sattens, and all manner of Silks, Allums, Currans, and ſuch wares as thoſe parts yeild, with much Coyn.

Into the Eaſt Countries they load 50, or 60. Laſt of Herrings in a Ship, making up their Lading with *French* and *Italian* Merchandize, which they brought home for Herrings; and return for Herrings from the Eaſt Countries, Corn, Wax, Flax, Hemp, Pitch, Tar, Soap-aſhes, Iron, Copper, Deal, Clapboard, Wainſcot, Maſtes, Timber for houſes, Shipping, Waterworks, Poliſh, Dollers, and *Hungary* Gilders.

Upon the River of *Rine* towards *Weeſell*, *Collein*, and *Franckford*, other Veſſels called Lurdains, drawn up with Horſes, containing 3, 400. and ſome 5, and 600. Tunns a piece; the Skippers have no other houſes with their Wives and Children to dwell in, and are born in them, and go always with them; theſe Veſſels carry up 50, or 60. Laſt of Herrings a piece, and Barrelled Fiſh, and ſtore of Salt upon Salt, returning for the ſame commodities; Iron, Steel, Glaſſe, Milſtones, Reniſh-wines, Battery, Plate for Harneſs, with other munition; Silks, Velvets, Buratoes, Raſh, Fuſtians, and other commodities, from *Franckford*, *Mart*, and other places of *Germany*; as thoſe parts yeild ſtore of Caſſiars, Gilders, and rich Dollers; the ſame kind of Veſſels paſs up to *Lukeland* in like ſort, and theſe do make but one Voyage in a year, but very rich.

To *Brabant* and *Flanders* they load 20, and 30. Laſt of Herrings in a Ship, returning for the ſame moſt part Coyn, ſome quantity of Tapiſtry, Sayes, and Hulſt Hops.

Beſides of thoſe Herrings, and Fiſh taken in his Majeſties Seas, and (none other) are vented in great abundance into *Grecia*, *Alexandria*, *Venice*, *Leagorne*, and all over the *Mediteranean Seas*, and other parts even as far as *Brazill*.

Into the Eaſt Kingdomes and Dukedomes, the *Hollanders* vent above 100000. Laſt in a year, and we not 80. Laſt. At *Roan* this laſt year we had not 80. Laſt, and the *Hollanders* had and ſold there 3000. Laſt, and ſo in other parts accordingly.

Thus are we eaten out of Trade, and the bread taken out o our mouths in our own Seas, and the great Cuſtomes carried from his Majeſties Coffers to Forraign Princes and States, by the greatneſs of their Buſſes, and the multitudes they take 19. weeks before our great Fiſhing begins at *Yarmouth*, and our Fiſhing laſteth but 7. weeks with ſmall Crayers and Gobles, where their great Buſſes continue the Herring Fiſhing 26. Weeks together.

So it appears how they make the Commodities of other Nations ſerve their turns to enrich themſelves, and increaſe thei Shipping and Marriners, and to ſet their people on work t good benefit, to enlarge thier Cities and Towns, and to ſtrengthen, and fortifie themſelves exceedingly; and what an infinit ſtore of Wealth they bring into that ſmall Country having ſ ſlender a foundation as Fiſhermen, is admirable to behold.

Thus they make their Landmen Seamen, their Seamen Fiſhermen, their Fiſhermen Marriners, Marriners Merchants, and o their Merchants Stateſmen, to govern and make their Countr proſper by long experience.

It followeth that one Buſſe of one 100. or 80. Tunns imploy eth three Ships, ſets on work and maintaineth both at Sea an

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Land above 400. perſons, and 30. ſeveral trades and occupations; that it may evidently appear how the 1000. Sail of Pincks, Welbotes, and Doggerbotes, and there 2000. great Buſſes, do ſet on work 200000. perſons, and 7200. Sail of Ships of the *Hollanders*, by Fiſhing upon his Majeſties Coaſts.

Firſt, ſhe ſets on work in her own Hull, within her ſelf, of Marriners and Fiſhermen 40.

Secondly, ſhe imployeth three Ships beſides her ſelf, one to fetch home ſalt into their own Country, another to carry forth Barrels and Salt into her at Sea, and to bring her Herrings back into her own Country; and the third, to tranſport her Herrings beyond the Seas, and in 3. Ships and Buſſes 100. Marriners are imployed: Thus are 3. Ships and an 100. perſons buſied at Sea by one Buſſe.

Thirdly, at Land of Spinners and Hempwinders to make Cables and Cordage, likewiſe Yarn Twine, and Thred for the making of Nets and Lines, Weavers to make Sail-cloth, Viewers, Packers, Tellers, Dreſſers, Couchers to make the Herrings lawful Marchandizes; Tanners to Tan their Nets and Sails, Saltmen to make Salt upon Salt, Coopers in great abundance to make Barrels, Block, and Bowl, Makers for Ships, Porters, Keelmen, Lightermen, and Labourers to be imployed in carrying and removing; as alſo Hewers and Squarers of Timber, Sawyers of Planks, Carpenters, Shipwrights, Smiths, Sledgemen, Charmen, Boatmen, Brewers Bakers, and a number of other perſons too tedious to repeat. The Sailſmen and the Marriners, with divers others, depending upon this unſearchable buſineſs, there cannot be leſs then 200. ſo that with the former there are 300. perſons and 3. Ships ſet on work by one Buſſe.

And having yet beſides all theſe that work, they have their Wives, Children, and Families hardly to be numbred, that neither do nor can work, and yet are maintained, and live wealthily out of this one Buſſe; the Marchants, Sailſmen, Owners of Ships, Maſters, Marrinors, and Fiſhermen cannot deny this.

I have ſeen of *Engliſh*, *Scottiſh*, *French*, *Hollanders*, *Embdeners*, *Breemers*, *Hamburgers* and others, near 3000. Sail Fiſhing at one time, upon the Coaſt of *Scotland*, *Shotland*, *Orkeney*, *Cattney*, *Northfarrel*, *Fowl Iſle*, and divers other places.

All the Buſſes of *Holland*, *France*, *Embden*, and *Hamborough* have their firſt lading of Herrings near *Baughawanes*, and above 1000. Sail of Pincks, Welboats, Doggerboats take Cod Ling, and other Fiſh there. Furthermore, all the great Staple Ling called *Holland* Ling, taken only by the *Hollanders*, are gotten about theſe Iſles, wherewith they ſerve all Chriſtendome.

From the Staple near *Barwick* all along the Coaſt of *England* to the *Thames* Mouth, are innumerable ſhoals and variety of Fiſh; beſides the multitude of Cods, Lings and Herrings, as Makerels, Whitings, Haddock, Soals, Thorneback, Floith, Scate, Brett, Gurnet, Turbutt, Plaice, Congers, Butts, and others innumerable.

From the *Thames* Mouth all over the Coaſts of *Kent*, *Suſſex*, *Hampſhire*, *Wiltſhire*, and *Doreetſhire*, not ſuch ſtore of Cod, Ling, and Herrings; yet the like variety of other Fiſh (and more) as the eyes of the Fiſhermongers of *London*, the Country, and their Fiſhermen can teſtifie.

All over the Coaſts of *Devonſhire* and *Cornwall*, exceeding great ſhoals and variety of Fiſh, with Pilchards and Herrings; the laſt year in *June*, ſuch multitudes of Herrings came ſo near the Shoar of *Claverly Key*, and all over thoſe places, that the people went with that ſmall proviſion of Nets they had, and took and drew them up the Land in ſuch plenty, that they were ſold for 4s. the thouſand, the number of a Barrel, and were ſuch ſtore that they gave them to their Hoggs to eat, and buried the reſt in the ground, for lack of Salt and Barrels to preſerve them.

Alſo about 20. miles from thence, there was abundance of Herrings ſpread the Seas, but the people took no more then they could ſpend preſently, for lack of proviſion to take and preſerve them, of which there is great want about *England.*

From the Mouth of *Severn* round about the Coaſt of *Wales*, *Hollihead*, *Weſtcheſter*, *Liverpool*, and ſo along the Coaſts of *England* to *Scotland*, there is ſtore and variety off Fiſh.

All over the Coaſt of *Ireland*, *Galloway*, *Slego*, and the Coaſts of *Cannaugh* to *Balliſhauon*, the *Band*, and the North of *Ireland*, *Longford*, *Karickfargus*, and *Strengford*, there is ſtore and variety of Fiſh; beſides the multitude of Cods, Lings, Herrings, Salmons, Seals, Porpoſes, Wherpool, and Dogfiſh.

In the Mouth of *Ireland*, not far from *Dunegal*, there are ſuch multitudes of Herrings, that it is hardly to be believed, ſo big and large that 3. Herrings make a yard in length: From *Carlingford* to *Dundalk*, the *Bay* of *Dublin*, and *Waxford*, *Waterford*, *Bear-haven*, *Crooke-haven*, and ſo round about the Coaſt of *Ireland* the like variety, and Fiſh in abundance.

The *French*, *Hollanders*, *Embdeners*, *Bremoners*, *Hamburgers* and others, Fiſh upon the Coaſt of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*; and this is the difference between them and us, they go forth in *June* to ſeek the Shoals of Herrings, and having found them, do dwell amongſt them, coming along with them until *November*, taking them in great abundance; and we ſtay till the Herrings come home to our own Coaſt, and ſome time ſuffer them to paſs by us before we look out, and ſo looſe Gods bleſſing.

All theſe Nations do beat upon all his Majeſties Coaſts for Fiſh, with great Ships take and carry away innumerable riches, when our little Boats, Crayers, and Cobles, dare not look out at Sea but in fair weather (for in fowl weather the Sea ſwalloweth them up) neither dare they Fiſh far from the Shore in fair weather their Boats are ſo ſlender and ſlight.

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The people of *Ireland*, and round about the Coaſts of *England*, after they have been at Sea and brought home their Veſſels full of Fiſh, will not go to Sea again for more till thoſe beſpent and they in debt, till neceſſity compells them, unleſs it be ſome few, and they proſper, yet they are loath to take too much, leſt it ſhould be too cheap, for they never ſeek other Markets but their own; and our Fiſhermen go to Sea over night to take Fiſh to ſerve the Markets the next day, and ſome at 3. a clock in the morning go to fetch Fiſh, and yet return home at 9. a clock in the ſame morning to ſerve their Market with their Boats full, Laden with Cod and Ling and other Fiſh, and then to the Alehouſe, drinking day and night, till all be ſpent, and they in debt, and can be no longer truſted, and then to Sea again for more. This is the life of theſe people where great riches is to be gotten.

Such an excellent benefit hath God ſent his Majeſty and his Kingdomes, as, let all the Kingdomes in Chriſtendome be put together, they are not able to compare with the Fiſhing upon theſe Coaſts, nor yet the *Spaniſh Indies*: I ſpeak it knowingly.

And further, let all the Mines of theſe Kingdomes, as Lead, Tinn, Iron, Copper, Allum, yea, Cloth and Wooll be put together, yet, the Fiſhing will do more good to his Majeſties Kingdomes then all theſe, in theſe four points.

Firſt, for the augmentation, maintenauce, and increaſe of Navigation and Marrinors, which hath ever been held a ſpecial Jewel for *England.*

Secondly, in bringing into his Majeſty and Kingdomes, great riches of all kinds, and making ſuch ſtrength of Ships and Marriners, as will make all Nations of the World to Vail the Bonnet to *England.*

Thirdly, for the bringing in, and making imployment for all people, both young and old, for the keeping of them from begging and ſtealing, and other diſorders; and hereby his Majeſty ſhall make exceeding great Trade and Trafique within this Land, upon the Seas, as the like hath never been effected by any King of *England* for the general good.

Fourthly, for the bringing in, and making all things plenty, and cauſing many Storehouſes in *England* to be erected and filled full of Fiſh, to ſerve our ſelves and tranſport into other Kingdomes; like as *Blackwell Hall* in *London*, and other places in *England* are with Cloth, which continually are emptied and yet always filled.

It is moſt evident true (God be thanked) that there is Fiſh and Herrings enough, and vent enough for us all, if we had as many Buſſes as they; for the 20. hundred great Buſſes belonging to *Holland*, *France*, *Embden*, and *Hamborough*, and above 200. new Buſſes which they build and increaſe yearly (all not able to ſerve Chriſtendome with Fiſh and Herrings) they are ſcarce and dear in moſt Forraign Kingdomes in Lent; and afterwards few or none to be had untill *Auguſt*. For in the Eaſt and North Eaſt Regions, and ſo in moſt Forraign Kingdomes and Dukedomes, the Herrings are every days meat Winter and Summer, as well to make them drink as to ſuffice their appetites, in ſuch exceeding requeſt are the Herrings that there is great utterance for them in all parts through Chriſtendome, and in the Heathen Countries; ſo that if we had 20. Score Buſſes, and increaſe them to 20. Hundred, yet is there vent enough and Herrings enough for us all to take upon his Majeſties Coaſts, God continue it.

And for as much as God hath ſent this excellent Bleſſing to his Majeſty above all other Kings, and that this huge quantity of Fiſh and Herrings do offer themſelves to his Majeſties Kingdomes beyond all Nations, and that it is manifeſt that the Trade of Fiſhing is work-maſter to all other Trades, and by that means the Dutch increaſe their Farthings to Pounds, and their Pounds to Thouſands, and what fruitfulneſs is in their Country? and not a begger there, every one getting his own living, is admirable to behold, that the poor man though he be blind, and have but one Hand, will get his own living by turning the Wheel for making Cables and Cordage; and others that have not one Leg, will get his own living, ſitting on a Seat, with knitting and making of Nets and Hooks ; every Boy and Wench from 10. and 12. years and upwards, will get their own living by winding Hemp, ſpinning Yarn, making Twine and Thread for Nets, ſo idleneſs, beggery, and penury will be driven out of this Land, by commodious conſtitutions as in other places they do, which never any Statute heretofore made could bring to paſs, to the great glory of God, and comfort of his Majeſties Subjects.

Licenſed,
Febr. 22. 1664.
Roger L'Eſtrange.

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